

Mack could have been a pimp. I got acquainted with his girlfriend before I worked in the House. She was always around to see Mack or Barrie. The first time I saw Barrie he was smoking a joint on the front lawn of the drop-in centre down the street. He usually sat on the front steps of Emile Durkheim House. I talked to him there almost every day one summer two years ago. I had lost my job selling antiques in a crazy store on Thing Street because the owner was too busy chasing women to buy me anything to sell. He was cunt struck.

I was running a flea market in my front yard to raise rent money. Barrie was amused when I asked him to watch my stuff while I went inside for lunch. One weekend he robbed eleven variety stores. In jail he'd been brain-damaged in a fight and he'd contracted hepatitis from dirty needles. By the end of the summer I'd run out of stuff to sell. I had a few photograph albums with photos of someone else's long-dead family. Barrie looked over at them with disgust. He thought no one would buy them.

I was sitting on my porch next door, guarding my inventory. It was the early afternoon. Barrie had gone inside. He didn't eat anything for lunch. He drank a can of "Insure" a day.